

**CALIFORNIA COMMISSION ON DISABILITY ACCESS
LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

March 29, 2017

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Michael Paravagna welcomed everyone and called the meeting of the Legislative Committee of the California Commission on Disability Access (CCDA or Commission) to order at approximately 8:30 a.m. at the Department of Rehabilitation, 721 Capitol Mall, Room 244, 2nd Floor, Sacramento, 95814.

The off-site meeting location for teleconference was the Law Offices of Paul Rein, 200 Lakeside Drive, Suite A, Oakland, 94612.

ROLL CALL

Staff Member Jackson called the roll and confirmed the presence of a quorum.

Commissioners Present:

Michael Paravagna, Chair
Celia McGuinness

Staff Present:

Angela Jemmott, Executive Director
Dharon Grayson, AGPA
Fajola Jackson, Office Technician
Rhonda Valdry, Staff Services Manager

Commissioners Absent:

Walter Hughes

Also Present:

No members of the public addressed the Committee.

2. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES (August 25, 2016, and November 16, 2016) – ACTION

MOTION: Commissioner McGuinness moved to approve the August 25, 2016, and November 16, 2016, California Commission on Disability Access Legislative Committee Meeting Minutes as presented. Chair Paravagna seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

3. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON ISSUES NOT ON THIS AGENDA

There were no questions or comments from the public.

4. LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE TAKING THE LEAD ON STRATEGIC GOAL #6 (STATEWIDE ADA COORDINATION) – UPDATE & DISCUSSION

- **Strategic Goal #6**
- **Survey of State Agencies**

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- **Draft Letter of Support**

Chair Paravagna directed the Committee members' attention to information in the meeting packet on Strategic Goal #6. He suggested an informal voluntary survey of state government on the interest in statewide Americans with Disabilities (ADA) coordination. He stated he drafted a 10-item questionnaire, which was included in the meeting packet, and asked Commissioner McGuinness for input.

Commissioner McGuinness thanked Chair Paravagna for taking the lead on this issue. She stated the question is what the survey is seeking answers for – whether each department has a transition plan or the particular concerns of each department about their accessibility. She suggested that the questions dig deeper.

Chair Paravagna stated he drafted the survey as a broad brush. He stated, if the survey is either too comprehensive or too in-depth, the rate-of-return may diminish significantly because of fear of this process.

Commissioner McGuinness suggested citing the code sections that pertain to pertinent questions. Chair Paravagna stated he did not put code sections because it may cause individuals not to answer the question for fear of admitting they are in violation. An exception to this is #6 about the California Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA) to point agencies and departments to a more stringent definition of disability in a way that was instructive and nonthreatening.

Commissioner McGuinness asked about the question on the current ADA transition plan. Executive Director Jemmott stated the importance of state agencies and departments being ADA compliant first before demanding it of the public. She stated Chair Paravagna created a draft survey and letter for state agencies to learn where they are with compliance. She stated she asked the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) for their list of ADA coordinators that may or may not be current.

Commissioner McGuinness suggested removing the "declined to state" option from #8 because public agencies technically cannot decline to state.

Commissioner McGuinness suggested adding more to the end of #10, such as "regarding your department's ADA efforts." Chair Paravagna stated he left it open-ended intentionally so that responders would not be restricted. Commissioner McGuinness agreed.

Chair Paravagna stated the next steps are to gain acceptance from the full Commission and meet with the DOR to discuss the survey.

**5. CCDA HOSTING LEGISLATIVE SUPPORTED TOWN HALL MEETINGS –
UPDATE & DISCUSSION**

- **Format and Agenda**
- **Potential Topic for Town Hall Meetings: Disability Parking Plaque Abuse, Use of ADA Office at State Level, Pros and Cons of CASp, and others**

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Chair Paravagna stated he met with Commissioner Lackey's office to ask for their assistance in putting together a town hall meeting. They requested that Chair Paravagna put together a draft agenda and list of topics and consider holding the town hall meeting later in the year at the district office in Lancaster or Palmdale. He asked for input on the agenda and topic lists.

Commissioner McGuinness asked about holding town hall meetings in both Northern and Southern California and planning them simultaneously. She suggested enlisting the help of Commissioner Thurmond's office.

Chair Paravagna suggested holding one town hall meeting, improving it based on the lessons learned, and then holding another town hall meeting. He suggested San Francisco as a possible location.

Commissioner McGuinness questioned, regarding opposition between the business and disability communities on placard abuse, if that should be the first topic and if it should be characterized as abuse. Executive Director Jemmott stated there are a variety of thoughts regarding placards, but there is a synergy of both communities because neither wants abuse. The idea is not the business versus disability community issue but rather how to bring all individuals who are directly impacted together on this challenging issue. It is also a better-known topic and has greater marketability over other topics such as Certified Access Specialists (CASP). She suggested including a CASp discussion in the town hall meeting to increase awareness and educate attendees on CASp-related issues because it may not have enough draw on its own.

Commissioner Paravagna suggested the topic of the legal parameters and use of service animals. There seems to be a lack of information on this topic and it creates the highest volume of complaints directed to the U.S. Department of Justice.

Commissioner McGuinness agreed that there is much confusion about service animals. She stated the business community is well-organized, but there is a need for the disability community's voice to be louder. She suggested a topic that will bring out the disability community to talk. The CASp topic is a valuable and important conversation but will require different marketing than the other two topics and it pertains to a more focused group of individuals. If the town hall is meant for conversations about public misperceptions and misinformation that will facilitate a full discussion and air some of those out, the placard and service animal topics more fit that bill. They are both in the public mind. She voted for one of those.

Chair Paravagna suggested holding a service animal event in one part of the state and a parking placard event in another.

Commissioner McGuinness suggested holding events statewide on only one topic at a time to provide the opportunity to discover different perspectives geographically and so everyone feels they have a chance to weigh in. She stated both suggestions are reasonable. She suggested picking one to start and seeing how it goes. Chair Paravagna agreed.

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Commissioner McGuinness suggested presenting the service animal and parking placard topics to the full Commission and the potential legislative cosponsors and asking for their input. It may create more buy-in if they feel they have a voice in what the topic is.

Chair Paravagna agreed that those are rich topics and stated the legislative offices may suggest a different topic.

Commissioner McGuinness suggested inviting speakers from the California Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), a local parking authority, and a member of the disability community if the topic chosen is parking placards. The service dog topic will be more of an educational session. She suggested inviting a speaker to present on the different types of support animals.

Chair Paravagna stated he and Executive Director Jemmott have had discussions about hiring an impartial facilitator for the town hall events who will keep the meeting on target and will come out of the meeting with conclusions or action items.

Commissioner McGuinness stated, from the Commission's perspective, the town hall meetings should be for information-gathering. The information gathered may be what kinds of questions people have, where the community may be lacking information, where more outreach and more education may be necessary, and potential solutions to whatever problems seem to drive the community. The other Commission goal is for education and listening to stakeholders' response.

Chair Paravagna stated the original goal was to get the business and disability communities together to find common ground that could be made into legislative concepts. Seeing the town hall meetings as problem-solving sessions is important and will create credibility for the Commission.

Commissioner McGuinness suggested waiting to work further on the town hall agenda until the topic is determined.

Chair Paravagna agreed. He stated the next steps are to present this to the full Commission and firm up a legislative cosponsor.

6. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Chair Paravagna stated the next Legislative Committee meeting will be held on May 24th.

7. ADJOURN

Chair Paravagna adjourned the meeting at approximately 9:30 a.m.